

# Messenger

Vol. 3 No. 2

February, 2005

## Five Goals of Every Project

Project goals keep the focus on what is most important. However, on some teams these primary goals are lost in their meeting's activities. Make sure each meeting is structured so as to move the project forward. Even if the progress is only inches rather than by huge leaps, the team must be pushing the project forward as quickly, safely, and reasonably as possible.

**Finish the project within the scheduled timetable.** Your goal should be to finish the project within the timeframe agreed upon. This means you must do everything possible to drive the project to the end and stay on time. Remember to avoid guessing and incompetence in the planning of the scope so as to have a reasonable time schedule with which to work.

**Finish the project within the scheduled budget.** Budgets are set by some project teams while others inherit them. Whether you set the budget or inherit it, you need to make sure you are doing your best to track your expenditures and know where the money is going. When you finish the project within the scheduled budget, you demonstrate your ability in running the project responsibly.

**Finish the project with the same level of quality.** Unfortunately, when projects lag behind, quality is often sacrificed in order to catch up. Project leaders sometimes feel that in order to pick up speed, pieces of the project will need to be downsized or cut completely. True, the project plan will have to be revised when problems arise, but the revision should never compromise quality. While it is important to keep deadlines, it is equally important to keep the project's quality high throughout the project

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**Knowledge is power,  
but enthusiasm pulls the switch!**



### How Important Are Project Objectives?

**Objectives must support the project goal's mission.** Interviews set the tone for what is coming down the pipeline with your project. You must acquire correct information in a thorough interview in order to establish relevant objectives to meet the goal of the project. Sometimes you must ask hard questions to discuss the bottom line. Remember, you are in charge of asking questions, and if you are not obtaining beneficial information or if you simply do not understand, you need to rephrase the question. Sometimes it is even good to ask, "What would be good to know about this project that I have not asked you?" The customer will expose extra information that is almost always helpful.

**Objectives must have some way of being measured.** Evaluate your project's core objectives; make sure they can be measured for completion. Often, objectives will focus on improvements but with little specifics for measuring progress. It is human nature to want to see success. Do not set your team up for failure with objectives which are too large or unclear. These can not be measured and will only cause frustration and ultimately hurt morale for future projects.

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# The Mathis Group's Messenger

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**Finish the project within the specified guidelines.**

Make sure you are meeting the customer's needs. You must "wow" the customer! This can be done simply by finishing the project with the specifics the customer really wanted. The best way to solidify this is to verify your accomplishment by customer handoff and close down.

**Do the best you can with what you have been given.**

There is no such thing as a perfect project. Some projects run up against major odds and hurdles. For example, many recent projects in our country have endured major setbacks because of terror attacks, severe weather causing power outages, or a nation at war. Even against these catastrophes, projects were remarkably turned around and back on track because of great project team leaders and teams. Project goals were met because they did their best with what came their way.

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**Objectives must have a deadline set for achievement.** Don't just throw out a time or date. If you are just picking a date from the air, then you are doing nothing any different from those who create a project plan without information. Make sure you take into account all the issues the project and the project team are facing. Many objectives will have only a brief statement while others will be numbered with detailed sub points.

**Objectives give team members authority.**

Authority can be defined as the power, right, and stamp of approval to make decisions. By making an assignment to a particular person, it will become a high priority. Do not be afraid to give people a milestone or a series of tasks which all support a larger piece of the project. By delegating pieces of the project, it is easier for individuals to control and advance the project. Remember, though, people need authority to run their portion of the project. Authority demonstrates trust in that person and gives the freedom to make a certain range of decisions.

**Objectives need to be documented.**

Documentation will keep you and your team focused on the project. Documentation will help clarify where you have been and in what future direction you are headed. Yet, documentation seems to be one of the weakest areas on all project teams. We often close out a project with little or no documentation, and we have no new ideas, processes, or best practices to pass on except what we have kept logged in our memory. Sometimes, we even pitch our project notes taken during meetings throughout the project. Yes, it is important to document all projects and maintain a register of what has been discovered throughout the project. This type of documentation is invaluable for the future establishing of project best practices.

**Objectives drive the project forward.**

As you have meetings and discuss objectives and deliverables, you need to make sure you are driving the project forward. This is accomplished best by making sure you have action plans and assignments throughout the project. This should include specific actions steps and detailed implementation plans. You also must decide how you will measure each objective or deliverable. This forces you to create progress indicators throughout the project for measuring. Gantt charts, time charts and critical path charts can help measure the progress of the project.